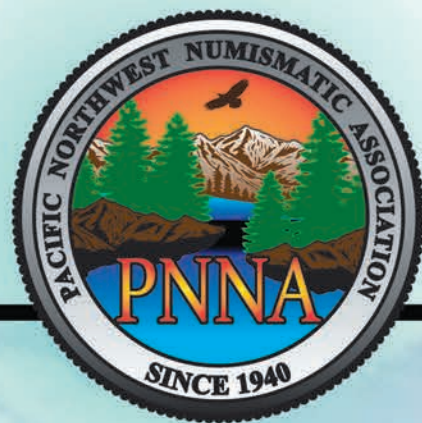


The Nor'wester

4th Quarter 2019 • October - November - December



ANA Summer Seminar Creations – Hobo Nickel Carving and Intaglio Engraving



*Photos of Tiny Cross
(famous nickel carver),
carving tools and
hobo nickel by Ed Fischer.*



*Photos of Intaglio engraving
class design and final print
by Alex Mous.*



See articles on pp. 14-15.

ANACS submissions accepted at show – See back-cover ad.



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For membership information please see page 6,
 the PNNA website, or attend the convention.



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PNNA Dues

PNNA dues are assessed annually in January. If you have not yet paid for 2020, you will receive a reminder next year, however you are encouraged to pay early. Individual online-only dues are \$10; family groups and clubs are \$15. Life membership costs \$200. Add \$5/year for paper. For more information please see <http://www.pnna.org/info/membership.html>.

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Deadline for submission of material for 1st Quarter 2020 Nor'wester: Dec. 15, 2019.

Inquiries

Email inquiries to info@pnna.org.

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PNNA members may request advertising on the website sponsor page and/or in editions of *The Nor'wester* distributed at coin shows and conventions. For information, make inquiry to the address above or directly to the editor/webmaster.

Privacy Policy

The new PNNA Privacy and Data Usage Policy, adopted by the board in July 2018, is available online at <http://pnna.org/info/privacy.html>.



Locally printed in Everett, Wash. When you finish this magazine, please recycle it or share it with another collector!

Welcome to Portland!

by General Chairman and PNNA V.P. Ed Fischer

The Fall PNNA/WCC is one hot tamale in regional coin shows. There are several out-of-state and cross-country dealers. This, on top of the non-local regular vendors, gives the collector more variety to choose from. Add this to the great selection our local dealers can bring, and you can find just about anything. We are truly blessed in the numismatic community. The floor will be full!

Look for your free elongated cent with the 160 years of Oregon statehood design (see page 6). The designer was WCC Vice President Daniel Wells. We are always looking for next year's design and gladly accept input. Who knows, you may have your concept immortalized. All elongated cents are given away free to everyone who attends.

The show will open on Friday for those willing to pay the early bird price while dealers are setting up. Bourse floor is located at the DoubleTree Lloyd Center. On Saturday and Sunday, the bourse opens at 10 a.m. Early bird opportunities will be offered at \$25 both days. *Please see the next column for details on the show hours.*

Education is the foundation of any healthy coin club and Portland is no exception. Ask any volunteer at the show or meeting and you can be directed to someone who is an expert in that area. And don't forget those just starting. Sometimes getting the info to the newbie will help them avoid the pitfalls we fell into as beginners.

Willamette Coin Club

The club's website is <https://pdxcoinclub.org>. Check it out. It will be expanding over the next year and the club is accepting articles and videos.

The club holds its monthly meetings on the third Thursday of each month. Since the meeting location may be subject to change, please see the website for current information before attending.

For more information or for questions about the WCC, please email pdxcoinclub@gmail.com.

Hope to see you there. For additional questions, email me at edoregon@comcast.net, or call 503-507-6721.

Hours are (subject to change):



Dealer/exhibitor set up and Early Bird entry:

Fri., Nov. 1, 3 - 6 p.m.

Sat., Nov. 2, 8 - 10 a.m.

Sun., Nov. 3, 9 - 10 a.m.

Public entry:

Sat., Nov. 2, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Sun., Nov. 3, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Additional Coin Show Information

- Show location: DoubleTree Lloyd Center, 1000 NE Multnomah Street, Portland, Oregon, just a short walk from the Lloyd Center shopping areas. There is paid parking at the hotel and on surrounding streets. There are also a number of other hotels within a reasonable distance.
- Regular admission is \$2.00 per day, and you might win something in the hourly door prize drawings. Early Bird admission is available at extra cost.
- See the PNNA website for a list of dealers.
- ANACS (grading service) will be at the show, with a bourse table. They will be accepting submissions, but there will not be a grader present. See their back-cover ad and also the ANACS website (www.anacs.com).
- There will be a WCC information table, offering free coins for kids (YNs). The club is seeking donations for these giveaways.
- There will be judged collector exhibits and awards again this year. For additional information about collector exhibits at the PNNA conventions, including the exhibit applications, rules and judging criteria, please see the PNNA exhibits webpage: <http://www.pnna.org/exhibits/exhibits.html>.
- There will once again be souvenir elongated coins with a special design, and you can make your own with the PNNA's "penny press." (See page 6.)
- Many thanks to the Willamette Coin Club and their dedicated members for hosting the show.

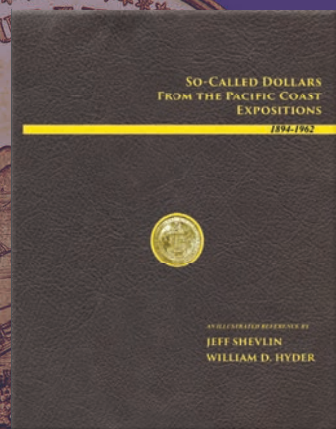
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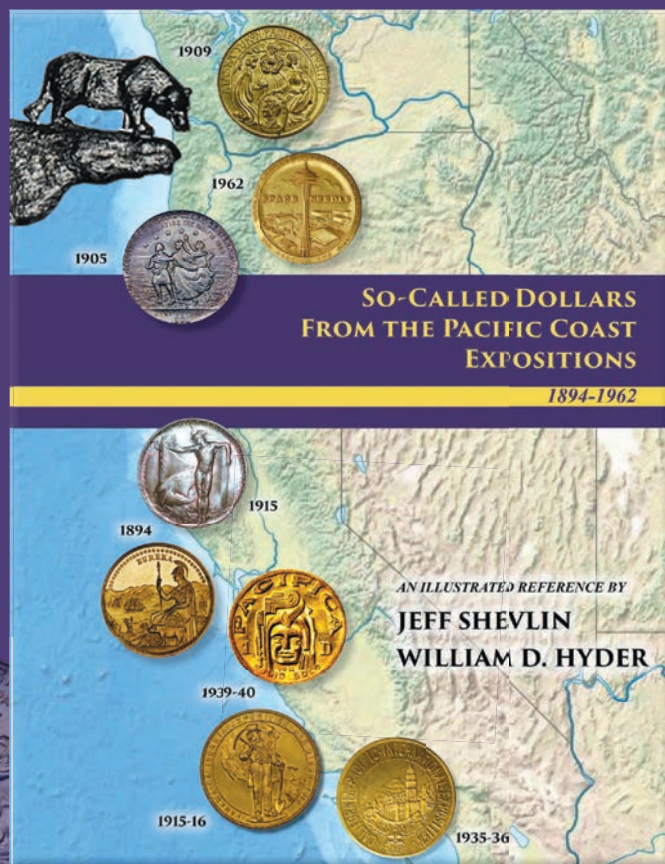
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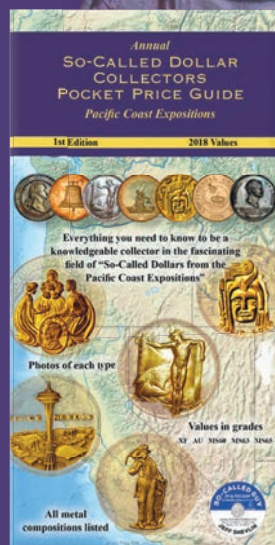
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PNNA President's Message

by PNNA President James Reinders

Fall is here, and so is an exciting line-up of things to do.

We have our annual show with WCC, coming soon on Nov. 2-3 (setup on Nov. 1). There is a great educational opportunity as well on Saturday, Nov. 2 — a morning workshop on Exonumia — be sure to sign up!



Understanding Exonumia: A Workshop

Saturday, November 2,
2019, 9 a.m.-noon

Sign-up:
[https://tinyurl.com/
Exonumia2019](https://tinyurl.com/Exonumia2019) (an easy
-to-type link to the
PNNA calendar entry)

We will also have a Scouting merit badge clinic on that same Saturday afternoon — please encourage any scouts that you know to join us (a flyer can be download from the PNNA website on the YN/Scouting page — either for Portland in November, or for Tukwila in March). Your help spreading the word about these clinics is welcome!

Exhibiting is always encouraged at the shows — if you get your exhibit in for Portland (Nov. 1-3), you can also take it to Salem (Dec. 7-8), Boeing (Jan. 18-19), and Tukwila (March 20-22) — all inside the Pacific Northwest. Of course, ANA and other shows outside the Northwest offer opportunities as well to share your collection and knowledge through collector exhibiting!



It has been 50 years since Apollo 11 landed the first humans on the Moon. The U.S. Mint, and others, have commemorated it this year.

*At left: U.S. Mint
image of Apollo 11
commemorative
coin.*

I believe we will see at least two exhibits related to Apollo 11 at the Portland show. And, there is always room for more on Apollo 11, or any topic you care to exhibit.

Sign-ups are coming soon for the class in March ...



ANA Counterfeit Detection Course

Wednesday-Thursday,
March 18-19, 2020

Sign-up: Being finalized, will
be on <http://pnna.org> (check
the calendar)

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates and Locations:

- Nov. 2, 2019 at the WCC/PNNA Portland Convention, DoubleTree Lloyd Center, Portland, Ore., at about 6 p.m. (earlier if everyone is ready)
- Jan. 18, 2020 at the Boeing Employee's Coin Club Show, Kent Commons, Kent, Wash., right after the show closes (start meeting about 5:20 p.m.)
- Mar. 21, 2020 at the PNNA show in Tukwila, at 8 a.m. (the annual membership meeting is after the show that same day)

Guests are always welcome to drop in on any board meeting - they are always open! The Board and Officers serve at your pleasure — please contact any one of us with your suggestions. We want to grow this organization and we want to better educate our members on the subject of numismatics.

There are many other coin shows to enjoy this fall and winter. See <http://pnna.org/calendar.html> for up-to-date listings.



Image: 2019 WCC/PNNA Portland fall coin show elongated coin design by Daniel Wells (of WCC). Please be sure to get your free elongated cent at the show. See page 3 for "Welcome to Portland!" message.



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PNNA information email: info@pnna.org

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U.S. Gold "Half Dollars" – Where Are They Now?

by Mark Benvenuto

Both the Royal Canadian Mint and the United States Mint have been pounding out rivers of commemoratives over the past few decades, and both have tried some amazing new ideas in coinage somewhat more recently. We now have the following from which to choose: colorized coins, cupped coins, and coins of decidedly different shapes than round, to name just a few. We also have some made from metals that have not traditionally been used in coinage. And the U.S. has two very interesting half dollars – or at least half dollars in name. There is a 2014 Kennedy "half dollar" in gold, as well as a 2016 Walking Liberty "half dollar," also in gold. Now that the immediate hype of their releases has passed, it might be a good time to ask ourselves just where these two special pieces fit into collections today.

First, the 2014 Kennedy

The Kennedy half dollar series has been produced for decades, even though the coins don't see much daily use, and in 2014 the series had reached its fifty-year anniversary. For the anniversary, this new, special gold version was issued, for one year only. Since this special piece was issued only five years ago, most serious collectors can remember the buzz that went into the first day release of it. This was something not seen before, a gold version of a circulating coin, complete with the words "Half Dollar" on the reverse, even though it clearly was never going to circulate as a fifty-cent piece. The rush to get them right as they were made available was about as close as coin collectors ever get to imitating fans at a rock concert. But after that first wave and that bit of craziness we hear ... nothing?

For those of us who did not jump up to buy one of these right as they came out of the gate, the way we take a long look at any coin and where it fits into any greater collection is to give it some time. Well,

five years later almost every major price guide does list the 2014-W gold Kennedy half dollar, usually in amongst all the other Kennedys. The price tag attached to one of these modern pieces is about \$1,250 for an example in PF-65, or \$1,450 in an absolute top-notch grade. Perhaps obviously, we'll have to ask, is it worth it?

To answer that question, some statistics on this gold half dollar are in order. First, it contains $\frac{3}{4}$ th of an ounce of gold. Second, the total mintage is 73,772 proofs, that's it. And third, price lists and grading sheets often list this coin in grades as high as PF-69DC, meaning deep cameo.

With those numbers in mind, we can determine that when gold trades at \$1,500 per ounce, there is \$1,125 worth of the precious metal in each coin. So that just-listed price is not really all that much of a premium, at least not at the PF-65 level. And while the total mintage seems low, there have been commemorative sets which include \$5 gold half eagles which are far, far lower in number. So we can easily be led to believe that while the price is not too rough, considering the amount of gold we'll be buying, the chance of this jumping up in value in the near future is pretty slim, as they are actually a fairly common item for collectors.

Next, the 2016 Walking Liberty

The year 2016 marked the centennial of the release of three coin designs that have since become U.S. classics: the Winged Liberty or Mercury dime, the Standing Liberty quarter, and the Walking Liberty half dollar. This trio was all produced in gold for this one year only, but this time the Walking Liberty design utilized $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce of it. That lower weight when compared to the 2014-W Kennedy means it ought to cost somewhat less.

Virtually all of the major price guides give values for this gold "half dollar" in grades such as MS-65, MS-69, and even MS-70 – the lattermost being that technically perfect coin. In an interesting twist, this piece was not made as proofs. All are in what might be called a business strike,

although no one plans to spend one in “doing business.”

Once again using the price of gold as some sort of baseline for this centennial “half dollar,” when it trades at \$1,500 per ounce, these coins have \$750 of the precious metal in them. Currently, the price guides tag them as \$925 coins in the MS-65 grade. Beyond that, it’s hard to find what we can call a standard price for grades that are higher.

Perhaps this coin was not greeted with the initial enthusiasm or mania of the 2014-W Kennedy. Perhaps the lack of a proof option kept the mintage down a bit. Whatever the reason though, the production total was lower, at 65,512 coins. But despite this lower mintage, it is still tough to classify the coin as uncommon, scarce, or rare. As two points of comparison, the 2016-W Mark Twain \$5 gold half eagle only saw 13,266 proofs, while the 2016-W centennial of the National Parks Service \$5 gold half eagle only totaled 19,506. So it’s a safe guess that the \$925 price tag we just mentioned is probably not about to leap upward anytime soon.

Overall, it appears that both of these gold “half dollars” can be described as being relatively common, at least by the standards of the modern

U.S. commemorative coinage program. Both carry price tags above that of just the gold metal they contain. And neither seems really poised to jump in price. As for whether or not they are worth buying right now, well, that decision is ultimately a personal one. But for those of us who can find examples at the right price, these can make very handsome additions to any collection.



United States Mint images.



Would you like to write an article for *The Nor'wester* and possibly qualify for a PNNA literary award?

Information:

<http://www.pnna.org/awards/literary.html>

Awards are given annually for club newsletters and for articles in *The Nor'wester*.

Thank you for your interest in the PNNA!

PNNA Membership Information — If you have questions about your PNNA membership or would like to join, please contact: Eric Holcomb, 1900 NE 3rd St STE 106 PMB 361, Bend, OR 97701-3889, phone (541) 647-1021, email eric@holcomb.com. Individuals, families and clubs can join PNNA for 3 years and save money! See the PNNA website memberships page for details.



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ANA and PNNA News

PNNA does it again

by Ed Fischer

Once again, the benefits of membership in PNNA shine through. This time in the form of the ANA Summer Seminar scholarship I received. This year it was worth \$1,050 towards a week of tuition.

If you ever get a taste of the depth of available education and comradery, you will feel the pull to go every year. I contemplate the possibilities every year when the registration time rolls around. I process available vacation time, other family commitments and dollars needed to make the trip to Colorado Springs. The types of classes are extremely varied, and this year I took classes in areas I knew nothing about.

I took "14 Mexican Mints" from instructor Ricardo De Leon Tallavas. We started early and ended late every day. It added up to an additional 4+ hours of class time. Fabulous teacher who knew the coinage and associated history of Mexico. In the evening, I took the "Pioneer Gold" class from David McCarthy and Don Kagin. David is always a wealth of knowledge, and told some stories about Mormon gold and the Saddle Ridge Hoard.

Between weeks 1 and 2 a trip to the Denver Mint took us to Denver. I also made a trip to Royal

Gorge with my comrade, Thomas Pollandt. Excellent hike that ended in being caught in a hail and lightning storm! (*Gorge image in background.*)

Week 2 was less cerebral and more physical. I am not in the least bit artistic and attempted the "Hobo Nickel Carving" class with Joe Paonessa. I succeeded in creating two and a half carvings. My first was an attempt at a self-portrait. We had several well-known carvers show up at the class to share. Joe was very patient with ALL of us, and with the help of Tiny Cross, the class created several masterpieces. The evening class of week 2 was about the "Carson City Mint" by David Jaeger. He could look at a mintmark and tell the denomination and year.

In between all these classes were the other events and times to kibitz with fellow coin collectors. We had opening ceremonies, book sales, YN auctions, awards banquets, receptions, bull sessions and of course the Lunar Lounge. Things I did not get involved with that ANA offered were a trip to a gold mine, brewery tours, run up Pikes Peak and so much more.

I want to thank PNNA again for assisting me in attending. I am now a resource on what was learned, and maybe you have questions about how to get yourself to ANA Summer Seminar.

Intaglio Engraving in Four Days

My Experience at the ANA Summer Seminar 2019 by Alex Mous

From June 15 to June 20, I attended the ANA Summer Seminar on a PNNA scholarship. I took the "Intaglio Engraving" course, which was an introduction to the process, or art, of Intaglio engraving and etching. This class was taught by Christopher Madden, a recently retired banknote engraver with 40 years of experience at the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

On the first day of class, the instructor explained the process of engraving, etching and printing. He

also detailed some history and background, and showed some of his engravings. That same day, we began tracing our designs onto acetate film using scribes, tools with a round, sharp point.

After we finished scribing (1-2 days later), we applied a "hard ground" to the zinc printing plates. Hard ground protects the plate from the acid when etching. To transfer our designs from the acetate to the plate, we brushed vermilion powder over the fine lines created by the scribe.

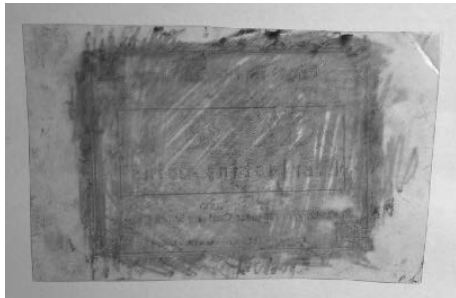
Next, we transferred the vermilion to the hard ground using a burnisher. Then it was back to using the scribe to retrace the design (creating lines in the hard ground where the acid could etch).

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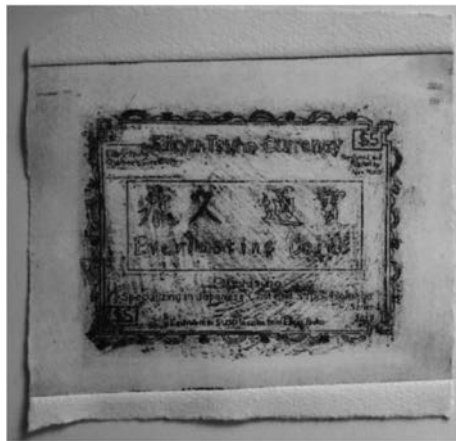
All photos by author.



A laser-print of my original design.



Acetate tracing of my design (note the vermilion that is still present from the transfer to the plate)



A final proof from the metal plate. Note that the black "haze" is from where the metal was not protected with enough hard ground during the acid etching. This very common issue is

known as "foul bite."



This is the finished metal plate after three fun, albeit long, days of work.

After that, we placed our plates in an acid bath to etch them. Finally, we created proofs (trial prints) of our plates and used the graver (a cutting tool) to emphasize certain parts of our designs.

I now deeply appreciate the amount of time and effort that goes into creating an engraving, such as the portrait on a banknote. My plate is not perfect. However, considering that it takes years of training to become a good engraver, and that it takes a professional engraver several months to create a design, I am pleased with my plate and prints. After all, as the instructor so often noted, this class was about the process of creating Intaglio engravings, and not about our final resulting plates. Besides, it was an honor to take a class taught by an expert engraver who created many of the designs on modern-day circulating US banknotes. Also, the opportunity to collaborate with other classmates on my design was a fantastic experience, and I made many great friends. I am grateful to the PNNA for giving me the opportunity to take this inspiring course.



This is a polymer plate I created on the last day after I had finished the metal plate. This was created by using only a scribe to trace from the design (in reverse).



A final print from the polymer plate. Compare this to the metal plate print and note how much cleaner this print is.

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